

THE ALPHA AND THE OMEGA.

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AN EXPOSITION

OF THE FIRST HALF OF THE BOOK OF REVELATION
OF
ST. JOHN.

BY THE
REV. S. L. COUSINS, B. A.,
RETIRED CHAPLAIN, R. N.

"He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith to the Churches,"—Rev. ii.

DENISON, TEXAS:
PRINTED AT MURRAY'S STEAM PRINTING HOUSE.
1886.

ERRATA.


Page 10, line 3—For *xxv* read *xxiv*.

Page 11, line 9—For *spirits* read *spirit's*.

Page 11, line 26—For *Job ii* read *Job i*.

Page 11, line 39—For *iell* read *fell*.

Page 16, line 26—For *kind* read *king*.

 The reader will please accent the first syllable of "omega"
—the o is long, the e is short.

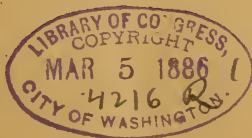
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PREFACE.

In the revelation of S. John, the LORD JESUS announces himself three times under a new name (chap. i. 8; xxi. 6; xxii. 12, 13), each time in close connection with his second coming, which forms the main subject of the Book.

The name is Alpha, Omega. These letters are the Greek numerals for 1,800 as in use at that time, thus: *α ω*. (See Bagster's Greek Lexicon for the New Testament, where the letters are actually used so. for date, on the title-page.)

Is this accidental, or designed? Few points are accidental in the language our LORD made use of. He understood fully the terms he used, in all their bearings.

If designed as a note of time, the expression would lead us to look for his second coming in 1800 periods of time counted from that date, A. D. 96.

These periods cannot be months, days, or any lesser ones, for all such limits have been passed long since. It is not supposable that they can be centuries, for the word of GOD nowhere seems to supply particulars of such extended periods as thousands of centuries, either in the past or future. But years are a very usual measure of time in prophecy.

If, then, the expression, "Alpha, Omega," was designed as a note of the time of our LORD's second coming, it most probably means 1800 years from A. D. 96, that is, A. D. 1896—really 1900 years from the Nativity, 4 B. C.

This view is confirmed when we examine the contents of the twofold record (written within and without: Rev. v. 1) symbolised under the seven seals and seven trumpets, which follow the opening of the Book by the Lamb.* Here we find the prophetic history of six periods (before the final seventh) admitted generally, if anything is, to be those between the date of S. John's revelation and the second coming of CHRIST.

Now the events, to which these symbols are usually referred fit, with exactness, into six periods of 300 years each, forming an

* It was THEN the Lamb took the Book from the Father's hand; this seems to meet a common objection to this investigation, drawn from Acts i, 7. and like passages.

interval of 1800 years. *Query, a w?* Does not "Alpha, Omega" seem to convey the "beginning and end" of this interval—its duration?

That the time of our Lord's second coming is indicated in this prophetic book becomes still more probable when we examine closely the seven epistles to the Churches; they form the introduction. It seems clear to me that each epistle contains a reference to the events of a distinct thousand-year period, or Millennium, in the history of our race, thus dividing it into seven periods of 1,000 years each,* and, reviewing the whole—I am not aware that this has been noticed.

1. The epistle to *Ephesus* suggests Paradise, the tree of life, and, of course, Adam's era.

2. That to *Smyrna* is resonant of death (vs. 8. 10. 11.), the prison, and suffering. So the deluge, when "all flesh died that moved upon the earth," occurred in the second millennium, B. C. 2348; and see 1 Pet. iii, 19. 20.

3. That to *Pergamos* alludes to the Hebrew wanderings in the desert, to Balaam and Balac, the manna, the stones in the ephod and breastplate of Aaron (Exod. xxviii), while "the sword" of v. 12. may glance at the wars of Joshua and the Judges. All these events and persons belong to the third millennium, about B. C. 1490 to 1090.

4. The epistle to *Thyatira* mentions Jezebel and her idolatry; "power over the nations and rule" (vs. 26. 27.) seem to recal the extensive dominion of Solomon (2 Chron. ix, 26.), and the flame of fire and fine brass of v. 18. suggest the sacrifices, the altar and vessels of the first temple. (2 Chr. iv.) Now, all these fall within the fourth millennium, from B. C. 1000.

5. That to *Sardis* is full of the teachings of Christ, in his own words, of the white raiment, of the Spirit and the churches (ch. iii, 1.) and the angels. All the events alluded to, the Nativity, life and atonement of Christ, the day of Pentecost and its results, occurred early in the fifth millennium.—Sardis, as is fit, was chief city of Lydia, the province containing five of the cities addressed, only Pergamos and Laodicea lying outside its bounds.

6. That to *Philadelphia* opens with the declaration that Christ retains in his own hand the key of David, *i. e.*, David's stronghold, Zion ("come unto ME"), however He may have conveyed to His church disciplinary powers for self-government, for exclusion as for admission, which, when faithfully exercised, He will surely ratify.

Now it was in the sixth millennium (*i. e.*, from A. D. 1000) that the most daring pretence was made of wresting from His hand that key, by setting between Christ and the sinner a human author-

* The question of the 7,000 years duration of the present Economy is treated, more fully, in my published sermon, "Creation a Type of the Church's History."

ity, supreme and absolute, as Christ's vicegerent on earth. Is it not a striking fact that at the middle of this millennium (A. D. 1517) the ambition and the needs of the Papacy, culminating in the sale of Indulgences, shook Christendom to its centre, and reft it into fragments, alas! all too many? We also find, at the end, mention of "the new Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven, and my new name." This, though still future, may presumably fall within the sixth millenium. May we heed the solemn, the repeated refrain: "He that hath an ear, &c !"

7. The epistle to *Laodicea* speaks of a supper of Christ with His people, and of His throne, of the gold, and the white raiment, and of a state of lukewarmness and spiritual blindness prevailing, probably, in the margin period of the sixth and seventh millennium.

Such an Introduction as these epistles (if I rightly conceive their purport,) may well prepare us for a note of the time of the end.

"Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you," I may ask, that the time of the second Advent should be discoverable in the New Testament, when the time of the first Advent was clearly predicted in the Old? We find holy Simeon and Anna waiting for the consolation of Israel, looking for redemption, counting the weeks of Daniel with their friends, at His first coming, and shall it be called presumptuous, or idle, to watch and listen for His footfall now? I have been met with the objection from Acts i, 7., but I think Rev. v, 7. and 9. fully meets it.

Some will doubtless condemn with faint praise, and declare that the Troubadour's lay "*e bene trovato, si non e vero,*" but I expect that others will find here reason as well as rhyme, and deem the suggestion a probable one. Now, "to us," says Bp. Butler, "probability is the very guide of life."

(See Introduction to the Analogy.)

S. L. C.

INTRODUCTORY.

A few words on the origin and the design of the verses here submitted to the public.

Early in the past month, March, I was led into this line of thought by noticing that as the fifth note of the musical scale, or dominant, is harmony to all, so Christ, Incarnate in the fifth period (1000 years), pervades and harmonizes all the history of our race. My violin is tuned in fifths, and each open string is dominant of the key whose tonic is the open string below it. This may be shown on the piano, etc., while the bag-pipes are a standing illustration of the fact. I then noticed in Bagster's Greek Lexicon of the New Testament that the letters *alpha*, *omega*, are numerals for 1,800. Applying this number to the seven seals and trumpets of S. John, as usually interpreted, I found the correspondence even startling. Drawing it out in a skeleton plan, I showed it to some friends, lettered and unlettered, and found they were struck by it, too. On the 17th (better day, better deed,) I spent a few pleasant hours over it with a Reverend friend. "Why," said he, "you have material for a volume here!" The saying took hold of me, and I have since developed the idea into the shape herewith submitted.

I will be glad to learn what the Church in its widest sense thinks of it. To me, it is full of "sweetness and light." I feel but one little twinge of apprehension about it. I would not willingly offend the religious convictions of any one, least of all, my R. C. friends and fellow countrymen. With Paul I can say, "my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is that they may be saved." With my old nurse, I may say to them, truly, "M'anam isthig hoo!"* I mean not to insult their religion (as the phrase is), their religion is S. John's and mine, so far as it is Christ's, and Catholic.

Excrescences are no part of the body. And the excesses, into which the ambition of a Italian aristocracy led the Papacy, at times,

* "My inmost soul you are!"

are deplored by Roman Catholic historians (see Fleury) and by a majority of that communion, I feel sure—

“I war not, friends, with you.”

S. LESLIE COUSINS, B. A.

RETIRED CHAPLAIN, R. N.

[It would be ungracious to omit the very courteous note from the able pen of Mr. Byrne, himself a graduate of Princeton University, New Jersey, on the appearance of the first part in a Texan Journal. *Rubesco referens!*]

“NOTE.—The writer of the following poem is a polished scholar, a graduate of Trinity College, Dublin. In his leisure moments he wrote these verses which we consider in many essentials fully equal to anything by Edwin Arnold. There is a great deal of deep scholarship and biblical lore contained in the composition. As a study for the curious, it will well repay perusal. It is given as a theory, which one can accept or reject as to them seems best.—*Editor.*”

THE ALPHA AND THE OMEGA.

Rev. I, 7. 8.

“Behold, He comes with clouds! and every eye
Shall see him—they who pierced His hands and feet,
And all the tribes of earth shall mourn, for Him.
The Alpha and the Omega I AM.†

Who is, who was, who comes—the Almighty One,
Ho ou, ho en, kai ho erchomenos,
Ho pantocrator—thus sayeth the Lord!”

This was the burden of the word that came
To the much loved disciple, as he dwelt,
An aged exile, in lone Patmos’ isle,
Pondering often, as he paced its cliffs,
On promises, on doubts, on hopes and fears,
If the dear Lord His coming would delay
Or should he tarry till his Master came.*

*John xxi, 23.

Yes, faithful servant! loving heart, thy Lord
Comes to thee now, and tells thee of the Time—

Did not *erchomenos* bring to his mind
The promise of His coming? Was he led
To “know the mystery” thus, a parable to others? *
In *Alpha, Omega*, (Greek numerals known,)
One thousand and eight hundred stand revealed,
In “*ou*,” he heard the seventh ‡ vowel sound,
In “*en*,” the seventh letter takes its place,
While *pantocrator* stamps the Almighty’s name,
And ends on the *a. o.* as He began.

*Mat. xiii, 10.11.

As the six work-days of creation passed,
The seventh a Sabbath stood, a day of rest.
So the seventh period, of one thousand years,
From Adam’s day, should dawn a Sabbath, too,
And Christ (Emmanuel § once, but Eli then) should come
In exaltation—(in the fifth he came
In meekness, in humiliation,) this the key
To all the sevens that through the Vision throng.

And eighteen centuries should wing their flight
Over Time’s dial, from John’s rapturous day,
Ere the great *Alpha Omega* should come.

One century had passed since Jesus lay,
At the fifth period’s dawn, in Bethlehem’s shed,

† “*Arche kai telos*,” beginning and end, is entirely rejected from this verse by Griesbach and by the Revised Version. It was probably copied into the margin, without articles, from ch. 21, 6.

‡ See Table of Harmonies.

§ See Table of Harmonies.

One century more were wanting at the end †
Of the sixth thousand—said He not before
When speaking of His coming, that those days*
For the elect one's sake, should shortened be?

*Mat. xxv, 22.

And thus, while all the periods of the strain
Move rhythmic, like the planets' paths on high,
Harmonious, as the intervals that bridge
Sweet Music's tones, and certain as the law
Of sound's vibrations, ‡ lo! the Bridegroom comes,
And Jesus is the Dominant through all!

Along the path of Time, the Conqueror's tread
Is marked by melodies divine—He moves
To music!—they whose listening ears,
Devout, are quick to catch Heaven's harmonies
As they review the plan, from firm foundation
To laying of the headmost cornerstone,
May hear the morning stars together sing,
And all the sons of God shouting for joy! *

*Job xxxviii, 7.

All spirit wrap't, the lonely prophet mused
One Lord's Day, when a voice, like trumpet tone,
Cried: "I am *Alpha Omega*! the first
The last, and, what thou seest, write
To the seven churches that in Asia dwell."

He turned to see the voice, and he beheld
Seven lamps, and standing in their midst, appeared
One like the Son of man, with zone of gold—
John knew the form!—that sacred bosom where
One solemn night he laid his happy head.*
He knew those lips, whence Wisdom's honey dropped
Or stern reproof, knew the expressive eye
Whose mild beam lit the weeping penitent
Along the narrow way. "Go sin no more!"

*John xxi, 20.

That drew the little children to his feet,
Or, kindling in a scorn divine, could drive
The money changers from the Temple's courts,*
Or dash false Judas' band* prone to the ground.
The seer beheld—'twas like the Son of man!
No more the Man of sorrows, for the brow
Once crowned with thorns, now shone like noonday sun!
The nail-pierced feet flashed like Colossus' brass,
His voice was as the sound of many waters,
Niagara's boom, or Ocean's hollow roar
Upon a rocky beach. His right hand held
Seven stars, a two-edged sword gleamed from his mouth!

*John ii, 15.

*John xviii, 6.

Prostrate the way-worn exile falls, as dead!
The right hand he* "had handled" reaches him
With kindly touch. "Fear not," his master says,
"I am thy risen Lord! I hold Death's key."
Then bids him write the things that he had seen,
The things that are and those that shall be, after.
The seven lamps are churches, and the stars
Their seven angels. This their mystery.

*1 John, i, 1.

As suggestive Overture may prelude Oratorio's strains,
Seven epistles hint the drama of the Church's toils and gains.

† The date of St. John's vision is A. D. 96, really 100 years from the Incarnation. If we count 1800 from this, we are brought to A. D. 1836, or 1900 from the Incarnation.

‡ If the Tonic of a scale vibrate 12, the Dominant's vibrations will be 13 in the same time, and the Octave's 24.

Chapter II.

Obedient, his full heart indites,
And thus the loved disciple writes:

FIRST MILLENNIUM, B. C. 4000 TO 3000.

First, Ephesus he gently cheers,
Lauds her patience, marks her tears,
Bids her 'lest she forfeit all,
Think on, and retrieve her Fall.*
Whoso hath the hearing ear,
Let him the spirits message hear!
"He that conquers in the strife
Shall eat from off the Tree of Life,*
Blooming on, 'neath summer skies,
In the midst of Paradise."

*Gen. iii. B. C.
4000.

*Gen. iii. B. C.
4000.

SECOND MILLENNIUM, B. C. 3000 TO 2000.

To Smyrna, second, writes the Seer
Boding trials, prisons* near,
Would ye win the crown of Life?
Unto death* maintain the strife!
Whoso hath the hearing ear,
Let him the Spirits message hear!
"He that conquers shall," he saith,
"Ne'er be hurt of second Death."*

*1 Pet. iii, 19. 20.

*Gen. vii, 21.
B. C. 2348.

*Gen. vii, 21.
B. C. 2348.

THIRD MILLENNIUM, B. C. 2000 TO 1000.

Unto Pergamos, the third,
Writes the servant of the Lord,
Praises their fidelity
'Gainst all Satan's subtlety.*
Points to Balaam's, Balak's sin,**
Be pure in faith! be pure within!
Whoso hath the hearing ear
Let him the Spirit's message hear!
"To him that conquers, his dear Lord
Hidden manna shall award*
A white stone too, with that new Name*
None kuow, save 'tis given them!"

*Job ii, 7. 9.
B. C. 1520.

**Num. xxiii, 1.

*Exod. xvi, 15.
*Ex. xxviii, 12.
B. C. 1491.

FOURTH MILLENNIUM, B. C. 1000 TO 1.

To Thyatira, fourth, writes he,
Lauds their works, their charity,
Warns them against Jezebel*
Her falsehoods, and her teachings iell
The Searcher of all hearts, he saith,
Will visit her and hers with Death!
Yet bids he those who have not gone
All her lengths, who have not known
The depth's of Satan's dark domain,
Their ancient Faith fast to maintain,
"They that conquer, that contend
For their Master to the end,

*1 Kings xix, 1.
B. C. 906.

*Solomon, B. C.
1000. 2 Chron.
ix, 26.

Rule o'er nations shall obtain,*
With their master they shall reign,
They shall have the morning star,†
Heralding the dawn afar!"
Whoso hath the hearing ear
The Spirit's message let him hear!

Chapter III.

FIFTH MILLENNIUM, A. D. 1 TO 1000.

*Rev. i, 20.

*Mat. xxiv, 42.
50.

Fifth, to Sardis' regal city,‡
Chief of Cræsus' Kingdom, writ he,
He that hath the Spirits seven §
Of the thrice Holy God of Heaven,
Whose hands the seven stars uphold*
Bids Sardis keep His words of old,
Bids her watch well, lest he might,
Like a thief, come in the night,*
Those who watch not, shall not learn
When their Master will return!
"He that conquers in the fight
Shall be clothed in raiment white,||
Who of Jesus shews not shame,
Jesus will confess his name
Before His Father, and the bands
Of angels, waiting His commands."¶

Whoso hath a hearing ear
The Spirit's message let him hear!

SIXTH MILLENNIUM, A. D. 1000.

*19th century?
Rev. xxi, 2. 10.

Sixth, to Philadelphia, too,
Saith the Holy and the True,
He that holds great David's key
Firmly shuts, and opens free!
Naught avail they who propose
Zion's massy door to close,
(Vain their idle words who claim
The toll gate of Jerusalem!)††
I will make the lying ones
That vaunt themselves as Israel's sons,
Satan's synagogue, full low
At thy feet to fall, and know
I have loved thee, and my power
Shall shield thee from Temptation's hour.
Behold I come! and speedily!*
Hold to thy crown with constancy!

*19th century?
Rev. xxi, 2. 10.

"He that conquereth shall shine
Polished shaft in fane divine,
I will write on him my new name,
My God's, and new Jerusalem
Coming down from Heaven above,*
Earnest of the Father's love!"
He that hath a hearing ear
The Spirit's message let him hear!

† Isaiah and the prophets heralded the Advent, B. C. 760 to 397.

‡ "Quid Cræsi regia Sardis?"—Hor. Epp.

§ Pentecost, A. D. 33.

|| The Atonement, A. D. 33.

¶ Angels appeared at the Nativity, Temptation, Agony, Resurrection, Ascension.

†† Sale of Indulgences, A. D. 1517.

SEVENTH MILLENNIUM, FUTURE.

Laodicea, seventh in turn,
Hears from the Spirit words that burn,
Saith the Amen,† faithful and true,
Source* of God's creation, too,
(Lord of the restful seventh day)*
Would that thou wert yea or nay!
Thou art neither, hot nor cold,
Thus I spurn thee from my fold!

[1,2
*Jno. i, 3. Heb.
*Mat. xii, 8.

Wealth‡ of all golden sands that roll
Pays not for poverty of soul,
Can sharpness of the worldly sight
Atone for blindness to my light?
Think you that soft and sumptuous dress
Can hide the Spirit's nakedness?
Come, buy my gold, all pure and bright
Buy at my hand the raiment white,*
And eyesalve,* that thy poor blind eyes
May see, the unseen to realize!

*Rev. xix, 8.

*2 Kings vi, 17.

I have stood§ at the door—I knock!
If any hear and ope the lock,
I will come sup with him, and he,
A welcome guest, shall sup with me.*

*Rev. xix, 9.

“He that conquers shall sit down
With his Master, in His Throne!”

Whoso hath a hearing ear,
Let him the Spirit's message hear!

The churches' seven epistles here recall
The seven millenniums, from Adam's fall
On to that day, when, the last victory won,
Jesus shall place His Saints upon a Throne.

Chapter IV.

In Heaven a door was opened, and the Saint
Heard a known voice (the same as at the first,)
Ringing, like trumpet tone, “*Anaba hode!*”||
“Ascend here!” (these the sounds that thrilled his ear,)
“And I will shew thee things to come hereafter.”
The voice that spake as “*Alpha, Omega*”
Now bids the Seer behold a sight divine.
See we not symbols clear foreshadowing
In stormy vista, eighteen hundred years?
Six periods, each three hundred years, we trace
Within seven seals, and seven trumpets bounds.

Spirit of Truth, that lit John's raptured soul!
Clear our dull vision as we turn his page,
Teach us to put our shoes from off our feet,
'Tis holy ground! Cleanse Thou those feet from all
Life's travel stains, for His dear sake who once
Washed the disciples' feet! take of the things of Christ

† See Table of Harmonies.

‡ Had St. John used this figure, the neighbourhood of two auriferous streams would justify it, the Hermus and the Pactolus.

— Ubi pinguis culta

Pactolus que irrigat auro.”—Virg. *Æn.*, X, 142.

§ Greek, “*hesteka*,” I have been standing.

|| Note the floating open vowel sounds, like the familiar “Boat ahoy!” and the answers

*1 John i, 5.

And shew them unto us! We gaze on Heaven!
 A Throne was set, and He that sat thereon*
 Was Light! Forth from the Presence flashed
 All the prismatic rays—the green—the red—
 The jasper and the sardius! A bow
 Gleamed round the Throne, in hue an Emerald.
 Around sat presbyters, in vesture white,
 Twenty and four the tale, with crowns of gold,
 Lightnings and thunderings, voices from the Throne
 Burst forth! (Jehovah's voice is heard
 Between the Spirit and the presbyters.)
 Before the Throne bright burned seven lamps of fire.
 Types of the perfect Holy Spirit of God!
 A glassy sea spread its calm surface round
 And in the Throne, and round, four living beings†
 Bore the bright attributes of God most High!
 The first, like Lion, shewed His sovereign might,
 Who dares to rouse Him up? The Calf displayed
 His Mercy's bounty—not developed all,
 It tells of milk (and honey) yet to come,
 The human Face spake high Intelligence,
 As flying Eagle, safe He bears His own,*
 The many eyes, and the six wings would shew
 God's Wisdom sees, His Love acts, everywhere!
 "Holy thrice! Lord God Almighty!"
 Those pure beings ceaseless cry,
 Day and night their praise ascending
 Fills high Heaven with melody.
 While that sacred Presbytery
 Worship low before the Throne,
 Cast their blood-bought crowns before Him,
 Saying to the radiant One.
 "Glory, Lord! and honor, power,
 Worthily to Thee are given,
 Of Thy will exist all creatures,†
 Maker Thou of Earth and Heaven!"

*Exod. xix, 4.
 Deut. xxxii,
 11. 12.

Chapter V.

*John xvi, 20.

Why weeps the Prophet? "Much I wept," he says;
 Do the warm tears well from o'erflowing heart?
 Have radiant splendors thus unnerved thy frame?
 Not so! he feared lest Disappointment,
 Canker of all earth's joys, should meet him there.
 Weep not! for thou art Jesus' honored guest,
 Soon shall thy tears "be turned into joy!"*
 A mighty Angel's voice had cried, full loud,
 "Who can be found worthy to ope the book,
 To loose the seals?" for guarded in the hand
 Of Him upon the Throne, a book was held
 Written within, without—seven mighty seals
 Secured, with jealous bond, the two-fold prize.
 The prophet wept! loud tho' the summons rang
 Thro' heaven, thro' earth, none came to loose the seals.
 Lo! at the center of the Throne forth stands

† These "zoa" are the four Cherubs of Ezkiel. (See 1st and 10th chapters of Ez.)

† Greek, "Dia to thelema sou."

A Lamb, as slain, in power, in vision perfect,
 He takes the volume from the Father's hand.
 Weep not!—joy! joy! † great David's Root prevails!
 Straight uprose new glad pœan, such as ne'er
 Or mortal ear has heard, or poet dreamed;
 Before the Lamb, all the loud tuneful choir
 That gird the Throne fall down, then with sweet harps
 Of praise, with prayers of saints, like incense
 Welling from golden vials, lead the strain,
 "Worthy Thou to take and open
 The bright volume's mystery!
 Thou wast slain! Thou hast redeemed us,
 We shall reign, on earth, with Thee!" ‡
 The heavenly hosts, massed in a circling ring,
 Angels on angels, seraphs' love-tuned tongues,
 Thousands of thousands, told ten thousand times,
 With hearty voice, chorus the mighty hymn!
 "Worthy the Lamb! all power, riches,
 Wisdom, might and honor be
 Unto Him! and glory, blessing,
 Throughout all eternity!"
 Floats the grand anthem far—yet farther still,
 Swells on, till the glad Prophet's raptured ear
 Hears, thro' wide Heaven, and earth, and quivering sea
 All creatures join the universal psalm! §
 "Blessing, honor, glory, power,
 Be unto our God most High!
 Glory to the Lamb forever!
 All ye His works, praise Him for aye!"

Chapter VI.

The Lamb received the Book, and as he broke
 A seal, in thunder the first Cherub spoke,
 "Come." ¶ And forth stands, all white, a gallant steed,
 Noble in form, in paces—such the breed
 That drew triumphal chariots thro' old Rome,
 When thousands welcomed a proud conqueror home,
 On him a rider sat, in mien a king,
 The bow his weapon, (light as David's sling!)
 A crown was given him, that beamed afar!
 Conquering and to conquer, he went forth to war! ¶

† "Joy! joy! for ever, my task is done!"—Moore.

‡ Greek, "Basileuso-men," or "usin;" we, or they, both future, are the only readings known to Griesbach, in Bagster. The Revised Version gives "they reign," with what meaning, or what authority, I cannot say.

§ This unrivalled, unapproachable outburst of praise marks how a common objection to any investigation of "the times and seasons" is met by Rev. v. The sealed book had been kept in the Father's hand (Acts i, 7.) till the Lamb takes it and opens the seals. And this is the burthen of that new song, that He was found worthy to open them. See also Mark xiii, 32.

¶ The Revised Version rightly omits "see." The four Cherubs summon the four horses successively. We can see the fitness of this: The lion like Cherub for the lion of the fold of Judah, the eagle Cherub for the fourth horse, bearing death, etc. See Mat. xxiv, 28.

¶ In the second, third and fourth centuries, the progress of christianity was indeed triumphant. The blood of the martyrs was the seed, (as is said), of the Church and champions of glowing zeal and ability replied to the various attacks on her faith and practice, as Justin Martyr, Irenæus, and Tertullian in the second century, in the third Origen and the historian Eusebius, while in the fourth century it is enough to mention the scholar Jerome, and the giant Augustine. Very early in the 4th century, Constantine, the emperor, became a Christian, thus, perhaps, presenting a crown to the rider of the white horse. By the end of this period the first two General Councils had been held, Nice, A. D. 325, and Constantinople, A. D. 381.

CENTURIES 2, 3, 4.

*Mic. v, ii.

Thus briefly be his story told,
His goings forth have been of old,*
From Northern Galilee he came,†

*Rev. xxi, 8.

To save, to mourn Jerusalem,
His legend, "Fear not!" by his side
None of the "fearful" ones may ride,*
Not his to fly with Parthian craft,
Forward he wings Conviction's shaft!
In the stern conflict that ensues
This the sole weapon his must use,
Thus armed, with Victory in his mien,
Enters the lists the Nazarene! ‡

*Zec. vi, 6. 7.

The second seal is opened—springs to view
A fiery charger, red, of fiery hue;
Lithely and swiftly must that courser go
That bears a restless rider "to and fro,"*
Whose mission is to take peace from the earth,
To war, to slay—such is his going forth,
Persuasion's influence, peaceful arts he'll scorn,
He bears a sword—he sits, a soldier, born!

CENTURIES 5, 6, 7.

May we not the veil displace
Draped around the warrior's face?
Does no trait au inkling bring,
Is he prophet, fiend, or kind?
List! as he moves along the sand
Sput on heel, and sword in hand,
Breathes his steed in nimble flight,
Reins him in the mimic fight,
Mark his sabre deftly go,
Glancing high or cleaving low!
Seem we not to hear the word,
His cry! "The Koran or the Sword!"§

*Zec. vi, 6. 7.

The third seal opens—next the Seer beheld
A black horse enter, whose staid rider held
A pair of scales, the while a heavenly voice
Proclaims earth's kindly produce, and its price,
The wheat, the barley, while the oil and wine
Are guarded, scatheless, by command divine.
This sable steed, this merchant from the north,*
With peaceful purpose, tranquilly go forth.

CENTURIES 8, 9, 10.

How changed the scene! strange weapons these
To bear thro' wars stern miseries!
Thou dauntless horseman, do we trace
In thee the symbol of a race

† On the colour of the horse's and the signification, see Zec. vi, 6. 7.

‡ "Thou hast conquered, O thou Galilean!" cried the Apostate Julian, dying miserably (A. D. 363) on a Persian battlefield.

§ About the centre of this period (early in the 7th century), Mahomet founded his religion. His followers, the Janissaries, etc., delighted in martial exercises.

By Alfred † formed neath northern sky,
 Commerce their pride, and husbandry?
 A race to girdle the round world
 With scales and plow, with flag unfurled
 Of Freedom! With all arts so fair
 That smiling Peace and Plenty bear!
 Tho' arms that steady bear the beam
 Can hold their own where spear points gleam,
 (How Cœur de Lion's axe of steel
 Made Paynim horse and swordsman reel!)
 Teach, Anglo-Saxon! sword must bow
 To Balance, Pruning hook, and Plow.

The fourth seal yielding in the Lamb's firm hands
 A pale horse next before the gazer stands,
 A ghastly one bestrides the ghastly steed,
 His name is Death, and following his lead,
 Comes Hades! o'er one quarter of the earth
 These are empowered to kill with sword, with dearth,
 With beasts. How dark and dire their aspects lower,
 This southern* warhorse and this grisly Power! *Zec. vi, 6. 7.

CENTURIES II, 12, 13.

Mystery wraps thy shrouded brow!
 Awful phantom, who art thou?
 None may trace, beneath that cowl,
 Priest's sly smile, or tyrants' scowl,
 Yet the shrill sad shrieks that rise
 Along thy track, rend thy disguise!
 Close behind thee martyrs' blood
 Cries for vengeance up to God!
 Bones of thy victims, driven to die
 Thro' Alpine vales, † o'er mountains high,
 Europe in blood seven centuries, §
 Sword, dagger, stake and rack, all these,
 Earth, air, and heaven, all point to thee
 Desolating Papacy! ||

Passed is the pageant, passed the horsemen four,
 As the seals open, champions come no more,
 'Mid trumpets, thunders, lightnings, and 'mid woes,
 These four contend until the glorious close,
 The Roll, beneath the three succeeding seals,
 A Cry, an Earthquake, and a Pause, reveals.

† The latter half of the 9th century is the era of Alfred the Great. He may be regarded as the founder of the Anglo-Saxon empire and race, which was developing, however, throughout this entire period. To Alfred the race are indebted for three typical facts—the foundation of a seminary, which afterwards formed the nucleus of Oxford University; the first rudiments of a Royal Navy; and the first translation of the Holy Scriptures, for Britons, into their own language.

‡ "Avenge, o Lord! thy slaughtered saints."—Milton's Sonnets.

§ The tenth to the seventeenth. From the days of Pope Sergius III., his son John X., and the bellicose John XII. in the first half of the tenth century, to the wars designed to extinguish the Reformation, ending about 1688.

|| Hildebrand, elected Pope 1073, as Gregory VII. "It was he who achieved . . . the perfect system of towering despotism over sovereign princes, which has ever since been the guiding principle of his successors."—Bp. Hopkins' Reply to Milner, vol. i, p. 94. This "Reply" is an admirable, judicious, and exhaustive work, but too little known.

The fifth seal next disclosed a symbol plain,
 Beneath the altar souls of martyrs slain
 For God's own word to which they testified!
 With yearning voice the war worn victors cried,
 "How long, O Lord, most holy and most true!
 Shall our blood unavenged delight the view
 Of those who shed it?" Gently they are told
 White robes close o'er their swelling hearts to fold,
 To rest a little at their Captain's feet,
 Till the bright band's full number be complete,
 Patience! ye hallowed ones—staunch bowmen,† rest!
 Jehovah slumbers not, His time is best!

CENTURIES 14, 15, 16.

High, amid the sacred band,‡
 Cranmer lifts his cindered hand,
 Latimer, and Ridley too,
 Huss, and Jerome, Anne Ayskew,
 Thousand others who have soared
 Mid leaping flames to meet their Lord.
 Thousands in their blood who lay
 On Bartholomew's fell day;
 Autos da fe and Dragonades §
 Swelled the number of the shades;
 Councillors of Lateran!||
 And thou, dark Dominican!
 When God for blood makes* inquisition,
 What will be your fell condition?

*Ps. ix, 12. Gen. ix, 5.
 Deut. xix, 18. 19.

CENTURIES 17, 18, 19.

The Lamb now opens the sixth seal, and lo,
 All nature trembles at the coming woe,
 A mighty earthquake rends the rocks, and soon
 The sun is darkened all—changes the moon
 To blood—the stars fall, showering, to the ground,
 The heavens depart—the hills, the isles around—

All the mighty ones of earth,
 Men of high and lowly birth,
 Fly to hide them from that face
 They sought not in their day of grace.

† See under first seal, third line from end.

‡ Abp. Cranmer, with Bps. Latimer, Ridley and Hooper, Anne Ayskew [or Askew] with over 200 others were burnt during the short but sharp reign of Queen Mary, from 1553 to 1558. John Huss, the Reformer of Bohemia, and Jerome of Prague, were condemned and handed to the secular power for the same fate by the Council of Constance, 1414.—At the massacre of Bartholomew's day, 1572, [the R. C. historian Fleury tells us] the butchery continued for 7 days in Paris, and more than 5,000 persons are reported to have perished. During two months there was nothing to be seen but murders in almost all France. The numbers killed amounted no less than 25,000 persons.

§ The "Auto da fe" was the rite followed by the Spanish monks as more impressive and edifying, and consisted in burning numbers of inquisitive persons in public together.—The French Dragonades, or Dragoonings, followed the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, which had guaranteed religious liberty in 1598, but was found inconvenient some 87 years later.

|| Two Lateran Councils enjoined the extirpation of heretics, the third L. C. 1179, and that of St. John Lateran 1215, the latter adding the rather carnal proviso, that their property should be confiscated. This has been applied to Ireland as lately as 1869 by Mr. Gladstone's Act.—The order of Preaching Friars, under St. Dominic, was instituted in 1216, by Pope Honorius, to be "champions of the faith and true lights of the world," in the words of the bull. If this energetic order succeeded in stifling the light, in some countries, by the Holy Office of the Inquisition, they made amends by throwing with faggot and brand a pretty considerable light on things in general, which, as the dying martyr foretold, "shall never be extinguished."

"Fall on us! hide us!" is their cry
 To the rocks and mountains high,
 "Shield us from the Lamb's fierce* rod!
 Hide us from the wrath of God!"

*Ps. ii, 9.

Chapter VII.

Slowly the awful vision fades,
 And a calm scene, in softer shades,
 Steals on—all's hushed! while everywhere,
 Soft Seraph music fills the air!

"Breathe not,† ye winds! on land, on silvery sea,
 Move not a leaf nor palm, nor scented thorn!
 We charge you, break not the beloved's sleep,
 Light sleeps the bride before her wedding morn!"

And lo! the Chancellor of Heaven's high courts
 Bearing the signet of the great "I AM,"
 Cancels the curse—bids the destroyers cease,
 Marshalls and seals the household of the Lamb.

First come his kinsmen, they of Israel's race,
 Twelve thousand of each loyal tribe are sealed,
 And Judah's* "Lion" takes the foremost rank,
 And Joseph's* "goodly bough" soon stands revealed.

*Gen. xlix, 9.
22.

Last comes Benoni*—last, loved son of thine
 Mild Rachel! 'neath whose gently cheering smile
 Thy Jacob served, when, for the love he bore,
 "But a few days"* appeared his seven years, toil!

*Gen. xxxv, 18.

*Gen. xxix, 20.

Listen! bridal strains are stealing
 O'er blue sea and dawning sky!
 Hark! ten thousand voices pealing,
 "Glory to our God*most High!"

Haste ye, tirewomen! now with blithe devotion
 Deck the bright tresses of the loved one's head,
 Let no ill draping mar the queenly motion
 Of her whose very hairs are numberéd!*

*Mat. x, 30, 31.

Hither bring odors, culled on many a mountain
 Lebanon's perfumes,* frankincense and myrrh,
 Bring the white* raiment, washed in Calvary's fountain,
 Surely no robe so fitly mantles her!

*Cant. iv, 14.

*Rev. xix, 8.

She has been nurtured for the bright to-morrow,
 Most gently nurtured* at a Father's board,
 And, having her soul's sight refined by sorrow,
 She has been schoolmate of her Heavenly Lord.*

*1 Pet. v, 7,

*Heb. v, 8.

Affliction's sea, with its wild troublous thunder
 Never shall vex her more, nor pain come near,
 Around those Heshbon-pools* of loving wonder
 Never shall eyelash tremble in a tear!

*Cant. vii, 4.

Now yields the seventh seal—around, o'er sea, o'er plains,
 O'er Heaven's vast amphitheatre, lo, silence reigns!

† Greek, "hina me pnece anemos." Who is not reminded of Webbe's sweet glee, "Breathe soft, ye winds!"

Chapter VIII.

Seven trumpets next prepare their clangorous din,[†]
The Book's reversed—scan we the roll within.

"Thy Kingdom come!"[‡] Before the Throne behold
An angel bears a censer of bright gold!
Incense mounts wreathing through the Elysian air,
Prayers of all saints and times are mingling there,
Filled with the Altar's fire the censer burns,
By angel's hand the answered prayer returns,
In veiled blessings, voices, thunderings,
Lightning and earthquake!—thus His reign He brings.

Seven angels stand, prepared, with ready skill
To sound the alarm; at the first trumpet blast
Hail, and fire mixed with blood, rush all around,
A third of trees, and all green grass is burned.
A note of havoc! sure some scourge of God!

CENTURIES 2, 3, 4.

See, thro' wide Europe, in pitiless rivalry
Vandal and Goth flood each blood crimsoned vale,
Ruthless Attila and Huns' fiery chivalry
Scorch in the lightning and beat in the hail!

An angel sounds the second trumpet, lo!
A mighty mountain falls into the sea
All burning—far and wide the astonished depths
Recoil, and turn their troubled waves to blood!

CENTURIES 5, 6, 7.

See we the ruin of mighty Rome's § empire here,
Fall of a giant! her fragments alone
Build up fresh kingdoms, while leaders of nations
Over red battle fields press to a throne.

*Rev. i, 20.

Sounds the third angel, and there straightway fell
From heaven a brilliant star,* like burning lamp,
Fell on a third of the cool streams and founts
Of gushing waters, turned their rippled waves
To Wormwood,|| (this the bitter meteor's name,)
While many thirsting ones drank deep and died.

† Clangor que tubarum.—Æn. II.

‡ This may be taken as forming part of the prayers of all saints, as it certainly has done.

§ The last emperor of the Western Roman Empire was Augustulus (d. A. D. 476). With him perished the last shadow of dominion; Goths, Vandals, Visigoths, Huns, had in this and preceding centuries overrun and harried the effete empire to death.—See Gibbon, or the school histories, as White's Universal History, for details of this most interesting and eventful period.

|| See Deut. xxix, 18, 19. and Prov. v, 4.—Many of the Roman excrescences on the "corpus" of the Catholic Faith had their origin in this period, not in the Apostolic. I shall note but four, taken from Fleury's Eccl. Hist. Tom. 9. 19. They are of much importance.

1. Shortly before the 8th century, A. D. 680, we find the first instance of Invocation of Saints, and then as a remedy for the plague. The relics of St. Sebastian, brought from Rome, were so used, and as the pestilence ceased soon after, superstition advanced with speed in the worship of the saints and their images. Early in the 8th century the Emperor Leo attempted to put down this image worship, exciting tumults thereby, but in 787 the Second Council of Nice decreed in favour of images, after several other councils had decided against them.

2. In 763 Auricular Confession was commanded for the first time in the Church by Chro-

CENTURIES 8, 9, 10.

Fair star of Italy! bright was thy rising,
 Bright as that guiding to Bethlehem's stall!
 Star of west Christendom, light of her first and best,†
 Standing afar, we may grieve o'er thy fall!

Angel of Latin Church! why the Epistle
 Fast bound in iron,‡ nor shared with the flock?
 Millions all round thee were panting for living streams,
 Wherefore not guide them to drink of the Rock?* ^{*1 Cor. x, 4.}

Mother of many folds! mourning the family
 Camping in many tents,§ sundered from thee,
 The Court of Jehovah has noted thy wanderings
 Parted us from thee, our Guardian is He!

Next the fourth trumpet sounds, a darkening gloom
 Spreads o'er a third of sun and moon, the stars
 Withdraw a third part of their wonted light,
 And day and night, one-third, are darkened through.
 "Woe! woe!" an eagle heralds, "three times woe
 To earth for the three trumpets yet to sound!"

CENTURIES 11, 12, 13.

Through the "dark ages" see Europe in dimness,||
 Eclipse of Ignorance clouds day and night,
 Egyptian and Arab, devotedly vying
 Tend Learning's bright torch, and preserve it alight.

Chapter IX.

Now the fifth angel sounds; from heaven a star* ^{*Rev. i, 20.}
 Fell to the earth, then with a woe fraught key
 Opens the abyss' pit, and straight arose
 A dense foul smoke, like furnace, darkening all
 The sun and air. Forth from the smoke there came

degang, Bp. of Metz, for his priests, the penalty for evasion being scourging and imprisonment. The first Council which enjoined this practice on all was that of St. John Lateran, 1215.

3. The forged decretals, in which all the primitive bishops of Rome, from Clement to Sylvester, were made to utter the most extravagant doctrines about the supremacy of Rome, etc., were produced in the 8th century. They are largely relied on by Gratian in his work on the Canon Law, 12th century.

4. At the middle of the 9th century, the dogma of transsubstantiation was first taught by Paschasius Radbert, and was opposed by John Duns Scotus [Erigena], an illustrious Irish theologian, about 850, and by Ratram, 859. Yet both these authors lived and died in the Romish communion.

† Besides the martyrs of the Catacombs several of the early Fathers laboured or suffered at Rome. Enough to mention here Justin Martyr and the giant Augustine.

‡ The Epistle to the Romans, for example, or the Epistles of St. Peter, or the Holy Scriptures generally: the general use of which it has always been the policy of the Papacy to discourage, although individual scholars of the R. C. Church, and even some Popes have rendered eminent services to Biblical literature.

§ The late Ven. Archd. Lee, writing of liturgical revision, warned the Church of Ireland against becoming "another of the multitudinous sects with which Christendom is distracted."

|| "In Europe generally, throughout this long space of time [5th to 11th century] we perceive the intellectual darkness, notwithstanding some brief and partial revivals, deepening more and more on the whole, as in the natural day the gray of evening passes into the gloom of midnight."—Craik's Hist. of Engl. Literature, Introd. On Arabic literature in the middle or dark ages the same writer quotes Gibbon, in Dec. and Fall of Rom. Emp., c. LII.: "The royal library of the Fatimites" [sovereigns of Egypt] "consisted of 100,000 manuscripts, elegantly transcribed and splendidly bound, which were lent without jealousy or avarice to the students of Cairo. The Omniades of Spain had formed a library of 600,000 volumes, 44, in the mere catalogues." Dr. Craik adds: "Arabic Spain was the fountain-head of learning in Europe."—B. i, pp. 44, 45.

Locusts, as scorpions, stinging with their tails;
 Not their's the task to hurt, or to destroy
 Or living herb, or man, but such as, withering,
 Bore not the seal of God upon their brow.

CENTURIES 14, 15, 16.

Again falls a bright one! East Christendom yielding
 Her ear to the Tempter, obscures her fair ray,
 Thy angel, Byzantium, heeds not the warning,
 Repent! or thy lamp shall be taken away!

See, the mailed Tartar swoops down on thy stronghold,†
 Swarming, like locust, o'er Bosphorus' tide,
 On each fierce "believer" the crescented turban
 Displays the lone Paradise-lock by it's side!*

*See v, 7. 8.

Cruel, mild Greek! are the fangs that have seized thee,
 Sting they like scorpions, the false Prophets' sons,
 Weary of life shall their chain-laden captives be
 Torment's the task of these terrible ones!

CENTURIES 17, 18, 19.

At the sixth trumpet blast, the angel hears
 Voice from the altar, bidding him to loose
 The angels four in great Euphrates bound;
 Quick he obeys. A swarming multitude
 Of horsemen countless inundate the scene.
 Against the very hour, day, month, and year,
 These were prepared to slay one-third of men.

Lo, the four Caliphs, Mahomet's grim champions!
 Each pours on impenitent Europe his horde.
 So plague followed plague, when the stubborn Pharaoh
 Once hardened his heart to the word of the Lord.

No longer the breast plate of iron encircles
 The Mussulman's breast as he faces the foe.
 A mantle of blue smoke, with lightning out-flashing
 In jacinth tint veils them as forward they go!

From the "sulphurous canopy" fast fly the bullets,
 And corslet would meet their sharp stinging in vain,
 Useless were breastplate when cannon unlimbering
 Deal a fell harvest of death o'er the plain.

Chapter X.

Who is the mighty angel that descends
 All draped in cloud? his face, as 'twere the sun,
 Breaks into rainbow tints the wreathing mists,
 And feet, like fire, bear the majestic form.
 Nothing he carries but a little book,
 An open book—was it too, sealed till now?
 He plants his strong right foot upon the sea,
 His left upon the earth, and tells his message
 Loudly, as tho' a lion roared, and straight
 Seven thunders spoke, their imports may not yet

† Constantinople taken by the Turks, 1453.

Be told, (the heavenly Voice says that the Seer
To nations, tongues, must prophesy again.)

Say, does the mighty angel symbolize
That merchant† race, to full proportions grown?
That mist wreathed Power, whose triple nest‡, far north,
Built 'mid the Gulf stream's fertilizing clouds
Is softly robed in climate not her own?
Truly "her march is o'er the mountain wave,"
With strong right foot, with fire, she rules the deep!
Her left, like fiery pillar, treads the land,
The God of battles goes before her hosts!
Glowed she not, like the sun, when Chatham's skill
Steered her 'mid tottering thrones, when Europe all
Bowed to her prowess? Tell it, Avon's bard!
"For who lived king but I could dig his grave?
And who durst smile when Warwick bent his brow?"§

Proclaims the angel, with uplifted hand,
All solemnly, as calling Him to witness,
Maker of all, that Time shall be no more,
But when the Seventh Trump begins to sound
God's mystery shall end, as tell the Prophets—

Angel of open book! may thy emprise
Be leally done in the Sixth Trumpet's days!

The Theologian, John, asked for the book,
Fount of all pure divine theology,

Asked and received it, at the angel's hand,
Like Jeremiah did he eat the word;* *Jer. xv, 16.

He found it, in his mouth as sweet as honey,
And having eaten, found his stomach bitter. Ezek. iii, 1.

A honey'd medicine* for a sin sick world!
It most disturbs when most effecting good. *Ps. xix, 10.

Be ours the care to inwardly digest,
The book, as John, as Blessed Mary did,
She kept His sayings in her heart, and pondered them.* *Luke ii, 51.

Divines! and would ye, toiling, scale the heights
Theology affords, and, prescient, thence discern

Drifting across the plains of human thought
Error, and sin, and woe? this little book

Shall clear both eye to see, and nerve to act—
"Riper and stronger"|| shall our Science grow
Just as we feed upon the Evangele.

And so shall we, through all Life's bitterness,
Have skill to comfort those in any trouble

With that wherewith ourselves are comforted of God.* *2Cor. i, 4.

Chapter XI.

And now the angel bids the Prophet rise
And measure out God's Temple, and the altar,
The worshippers as well—the outer court
Is given to Gentiles, and the Holy City
They shall tread under, forty and two months.

† See under third seal.

‡ The rose, thistle, and shamrock flourish in a notably damp climate; tria juncta in udo!

§ Henry VI.

|| See Ordination Service, where the importance of pastoral as well as dogmatic theology is fully recognized.

(When to Jerusalem, with mercies, comes
 The Lord, "a line shall be stretched forth thereon,"†
 Nor shall be wanting line, nor measuring rod,
 Nor chain, nor compass, nor exact theodolite,
 In that day when "the Lord has need of them.")
 An equal time they prophesy, two witnesses,‡
 Unburied shall their martyred bodies lie
 In that great city where our Lord was crucified,
 And, after three days and a half, ascend
 To heaven, raised by the quickening Spirit of Life,
 While enemies, astounded, own His hand!
 In the same hour a mighty earthquake rends
 A tenth part of the city; by its fall
 Are slain of men seven thousand, while the rest
 Affrighted all, gave glory unto God.
 Past is the second woe, the third comes quick.

Hark, the Seventh Trumpet! voices loud in heaven,
 Proclaim the kingdoms of this world become
 The kingdoms of the Lord, and of His Christ,
 And He shall reign § forever and forever!

See, dreamers! who would make men Gods by statute,||
 Your dreams—Equality, and Brotherhood, and Peace,
 Fulfilled, at last, in Christ's Theocracy!

Great Hildebrand! thou man before thy time!
 Behold the Despotism Divine, in Christ!
 But He is the Vicegerent, and not thou!

Ye choirs! hark how the Organist Omniscient
 Resolves the jarring discord of the Sixth
 Into a sweet chord of the Seventh! Him praise!

† Zec. i, 16. In connection with this the recent explorations and surveys of the Holy Land and the adjoining countries are full of interest.

‡ Very probably the Eastern and Western Churches; see article in the N. Y. Church Review of October, 1885. Some writers would identify one of the witnesses with the Waldensian Church, now arranging a union with the free Church of Italy. The futurist school of commentators would look for both in the future. It does not affect my argument to which end of this period the two witnesses are referred.

§ On the nature of this reign see the lesser Prophets, especially Zechariah—Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, all dwell, at length, on this joyful time.

|| Perhaps, in labouring after brevity. I have become obscure here. The reference is to those doctrinaires of the Socialist school, who propose to elevate men above human infirmity by special legislation, particularly on the interesting subjects of property and marriage.

NOTE ON REV. X, 4.—The seven thunders I believe to be identical with the seven last plagues (xv, 1. and xvi, 1.)—Though directed to seal up those utterances, St. John is told (x, 2.) that he must prophesy again. "The voices" of the seven thunders would have dislocated the narrative of the sixth Trumpet, (already an extended one) though belonging to that period; they are therefore deferred. For the Angel of c. x. is distinguished, (as the plagues of c. xvi. are) by marks of earth, sea, and waters (x, 2.) and of sun, fire and air (x, 1.), and he swears by Him who created the same.

The sixth plague (xvi, 12.) we may see in progress at the present day, in the drying up of the Mahometan powers, preparatory to the return of the Israelites to their own land.

The three unclean spirits (xvi, 13. 14.) are abroad too, plainly enough, but my space forbids further details.

To the words of the book I have not sought to add, or to take away, but to draw attention, though all may not accept my conclusions.

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